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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4961
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RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHMFIUU/CJTF HOA IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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SIPDIS

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SENSITIVE

ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU - AMB COURVILLE
NSC FOR DIRECTOR PITTMAN
DEPT FOR AF/E AND AF/FO
PARIS FOR D'ELIA
PRETORIA FOR POLCOUNS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [EAID](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [ASEC](#) [CN](#)
SUBJECT: COMORAN PRESIDENT SEEKS U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE

REF: ANTANANARIVO 583 AND PREVIOUS

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In a letter to President Bush (full translation in Paragraph Two), Ahmed Abdallah Sambi, President of the Union of the Comoros, seeks U.S. support for a military effort to restore democracy to the island of Anjouan. Sambi describes the repeated efforts - by his government as well as by the African Union and the Arab League - to get renegade island warlord Mohamed Bacar to submit his candidacy to the test of a free election. With Bacar stonewalling these efforts at a peaceful resolution, Sambi regretfully concludes that only a military intervention can restore the Union of the Comoros. He seeks U.S. support in carrying out this operation. END SUMMARY.

2. (SBU) (Begin Text)

Moroni, June 13, 2007.

The President,

No. 07-253/PR

Excellency and Dear Brother,

Please allow me to apply to you once again, to inform you of how the situation in the Comoros has developed lately. As you know, after a wide consultation with national institutions such as the Constitutional Court, the National Assembly, the Independent National Electoral Commission and the candidates, I have decided to postpone the first round of the presidential elections in Anjouan from June 10 to June 17, 2007, seeing that the conditions for free and transparent elections are still missing on this island. The International Community has acknowledged the legitimacy of this decision, namely the African Union by the Communique of the 78th session of the Peace and Security Council on June 9, 2007.

Despite the warnings of the entire Comorian nation and that of the International Community regarding the unacceptable nature of any election that might be held on June 10, 2007 by the authorities in Anjouan, these latter went on regardless. On June 10, these same authorities have held the pretence of an election, without any electoral materials or the participation of voters who remained home and without any domestic or international supervision. As early as Monday morning, Colonel Mohamed Bacar has already declared himself

winner and plans to inaugurate himself as President of the Island of Anjouan.

Following this masquerade, solely aimed at challenging the authority of the State and that of the International Community, a delegation -- the Special Envoy, the Head of the Liaison Office of the African Union, the representatives of the League of Arab States present in Moroni, and the South African Ambassador -- went to Anjouan to meet with local authorities and try to bring them back to reason.

The delegation met with local authorities and explained that the International Community, namely the African Union and the Arab League, do not acknowledge this pseudo-election and that the so-called results are illegal. The delegation also warned them of the serious consequences of obstinacy in this matter that might lead to military intervention.

Despite all that, the delegation has informed us of the firm position expressed by local authorities in Anjouan, who stand by the results of their June 10 elections and who oppose the organization of the June 17 vote in Anjouan.

It seems that local authorities in Anjouan are convinced that neither the Union nor the International Community would take any measures and that, in any case, they are ready to face any measure taken against them. This attitude shows, once again, how lightly the local authorities in Anjouan take the statements made by the International Community and the Union of the Comoros.

Excellency, the rebellious attitude of local authorities in Anjouan has exhausted all means of dialogue, and might spread to the other islands and jeopardize the unity and the integrity of the Comoros. This attitude of defiance could definitely damage the credibility of the International Community and that of the Union of the Comoros

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unless rapid and vigorous measures are taken. Excellency, the population in Anjouan is held hostage by a handful of men and constantly cries out for help.

I am convinced that the military capacities of the Anjouan Gendarmerie Forces will not be able to resist any clear display of resolved action by the International Community.

Personally, after having long avoided any military option, I have no choice today but to endorse such an option, which seems the only alternative left, following the failure of the negotiations carried out within the last forty-eight hours, by the African Union and the Arab League.

Therefore, I would like to ask you to please, once again, provide us with your assistance in carrying out a rapid and effective operation so as to avoid useless suffering for the population.

I rely on your usual understanding and your unfailing solidarity, and I assure you, Excellency and Brother, of my fraternal sentiments,

//signature//

AHMED ABDALLAH MOHAMED SAMBI

(End Text)

COMMENT: The Power But Not The Means

13. (SBU) In Post's assessment, Sambi probably has the forces necessary to dislodge Bacar from his ill-gotten power. What he lacks is the means to deliver them to Anjouan. With control of the airport and the seaports, Bacar has so far shown the will and the ability to hold off the Union forces. Sambi is probably calculating that he has three options: to accept de facto secession of the Island of Anjouan, to fight a grim and bloody battle to overcome Bacar with the forces that he has, or to get outside assistance from a force so powerful as to inhibit any resistance from the Anjouan militia. Clearly he is hoping the third option may be viable. END

COMMENT.

SIBLEY